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MEMORIAL

JOHN F. MEGINNESS

1827-1899



IN MEMORY
OF
JOHN F. MEGINNESS,

JOURNALIST AND HISTORIAN.

July 16, 1827—November 11, 1899.

A TESTIMONIAL

BY THE

GAZETTE AND BULLETIN,
THE SUN,
PENNSYLVANIA GRIT,
THE EVENING NEWS.

WILLIAMSPORT, PA.:
GAZETTE AND BULLETIN PRINTING HOUSE.

1900

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The death of John F. Meginness occurred at Williamsport, Pa., on Saturday night, November 11, 1899, suddenly and without a moment's warning. He had spent the day in Harrisburg, returning on a late train. It was after eleven o'clock when he entered his home, bearing a package of books, among the number being a handsome volume, of his own creation, recounting the incidents of his Golden Wedding celebration, which occurred on the 25th of October previous. While exhibiting this book to his wife and daughter-in-law the summons came, and he sank to the floor dead. At the instant of death he was directing attention to the features of the book. "Look at the title page," he said, pointing to the time-stained marriage certificate. These were his last words. The following chapters tell the story of his life.

SKETCH OF HIS LIFE.

John Franklin Meginness, journalist and historian, was born July 16, 1827, in Colerain, Lancaster County, Pa., being the son of Benjamin and Sarah Meginness. He spent his boyhood upon his father's farm, and attended the common schools as opportunity offered. A love of learning seems to have been born in him, and he studied hard and read deeply. The family removed to Illinois in May, 1843, and the young man accompanied them. Not liking the appearance of things in that country, he turned his face, in October of the same year, toward the place of his birth, having taken a sad leave of his mother, of whom he was extremely fond, and whom he never saw again. He tarried along the way, devoting some time to making steam-boat trips between St. Louis and New Orleans. Having spent the winter of 1843-4 with an uncle in Indiana, he proceeded on his trip to Pennsylvania, traveling on foot between Wheeling, Va., and Chambersburg, Pa. The following winter was spent with relatives, and the time was occupied in attending school and in diligently adding to his sum of knowledge.

The next spring he proceeded to Danville, where he was employed in the Montour Iron Works until, the Mexican war having broken out, he enlisted April 9, 1847, joining Company D, Fifth U. S. Infantry, then commanded by Captain Randolph B. Marcy. Reporting to his company commander at Harrisburg,

Meginness was soon selected by the Captain as clerk in his office, a position which, by reason of his excellent penmanship, he was well fitted to fill. He became a favorite with the children of Captain Marcy, among the number being the future wife of General George B. McClellan.

The company to which Meginness belonged, but without its Captain, who continued on recruiting duty, sailed from New York, June 19, 1847, for Vera Cruz, Mexico, where they arrived on July 20, 1847. Joining a column of 1,000 men commanded by Major Lally, they took up the line of march to join General Scott's forces. They were engaged with the enemy at National Bridge and at other points along the way, losing several men in a skirmish at the old battle field of Cerro Gordo, Meginness making a narrow escape, a musket ball having passed between his right arm and body.

With a column under the command of General Joseph Lane, of Indiana, Meginness marched to Pueblo, near which place the officer commanding his company, Lieut. Ridgley, lost his life in a dash to dislodge the enemy from a neighboring village. With the same column the subject of this sketch entered the City of Mexico, December 7, 1847. He made the march to the City of Mexico and back to Vera Cruz, carrying all of his equipments and never having fallen out of the line. During his entire enlistment he acted as clerk of his company. He kept a journal of his experiences, which is now among his effects, and which is not only worth admiring for the manner in which it was written, but makes exceedingly interesting reading.

It was Meginness' good fortune to be present with his regiment in the court yard of the National Palace when the first installment of three millions of dollars, out of the fifteen millions to be paid for California, was carried in from the wagons and delivered to the Mexican authorities.

July 17, 1848, his regiment sailed from Vera Cruz on the bark *Jane Gano*, for New Orleans, which was reached before the end of the month. Meginness and other members of the company who had enlisted for the war were discharged at East Pascagoula, Mississippi, in August.

The ex-soldier then returned to Montour County, this State, where he remained a short time, going thence to Jersey Shore, Lycoming County. There he took charge of a public school, which he conducted successfully for two terms.

On the 25th of October, 1849, he was united in marriage with Miss Martha Jane King, daughter of William King, of Mifflin Township, Lycoming County, and soon afterwards the young couple took up their residence in Jersey Shore. Ten children were born to them.

June 9, 1852, Mr. Meginness became editor of the *Jersey Shore Republican*, a weekly paper owned by Robert Baker and Jacob Sallade, holding that position until June, 1854, when the paper was sold. This was the beginning of his career as a journalist, to which he thenceforth, with such marked ability, devoted himself. On the 29th of June, 1854, he became associated with S. S. Seely, and they founded *The News Letter* at Jersey Shore, Mr. Meginness retiring from the firm on the 30th of August, 1855.

At this time he conceived the idea of writing a history of the West Branch Valley of the Susquehanna, which was immediately entered upon. The work was prosecuted with energy, and published by Henry B. Ashmead, of Philadelphia, in the autumn of 1856. It made an octavo volume of 518 pages, and was the pioneer history of this section of the State. The work was kindly received by many people in the valley at that time, who realized the importance of rescuing their local history from oblivion, but being in advance of the times the enterprise did not prove profitable. But the author lived to see the day when a revised and enlarged edition was demanded a third of a century afterwards. In after years the contents of his book were stolen time and again by others who entered the historical field, and two or three newspapers republished it in weekly parts.

In May, 1857, he was offered the editorship of *The Sentinel*, a weekly paper published at Peru, Illinois, which he accepted, and soon afterwards moved his family to that city. Early in the fall of 1859 the office was destroyed by fire, and he was again out of employment. Politics at that time were warm in Illinois on account of the great contest between Judge Douglas and Abraham Lincoln for the United States Senatorship. Having formed the acquaintance of Judge Douglas, that distinguished statesman and politician took a warm interest in the young editor, and through his intercession he was given a position as editorial writer on the *Springfield Daily Register* during that heated campaign. It was his good fortune to be present at several of the great debates between those two eminent men and hear them discuss the political issues of the day.

After retiring from the position of editorial writer on the *Register*, he was offered the charge of a weekly paper called *The Spectator*, at Carlinville, Illinois, with the promise of assistance to purchase it. He at once accepted the offer, and took charge of the paper in December, 1858. He soon afterwards purchased the paper, supplied the office with new material throughout, and being liberally supported, was enabled to become the sole owner in two years. But just as he was in a position to realize something from his labors, the rebellion broke out, and in a few weeks all business was at a stand still. In October, 1861, after a residence in Carlinville of two years and nine months, he disposed of his newspaper office at a sacrifice and moved his family back to the home of his wife's parents in Lycoming County, Pa.

On June 30, 1862, he moved his family to Williamsport. Late in the winter of that year he received an appointment as a clerk under Captain Wm. Stoddard, assistant quartermaster, Alexandria, Va. In a short time Captain Ferguson, quartermaster in charge of the post, and all his assistants, were removed. They were succeeded by Captain J. G. C. Lee, U. S. A., who immediately surrounded himself with new officers. The post at Alexandria was a very important one, as nearly all the quartermaster and commissary stores for the Army of the Potomac passed through it.

After two years' service in a subordinate clerical position, Meginness was made chief clerk of the bureau of transportation. This office was an important one on account of its close relations with Captain Lee, the quartermaster in charge, as all the

bills of lading of stores for the Army of the Potomac passed through the chief clerk's hands, and he was constantly beset with parties seeking transportation to the front. Frequent attempts were made to induce him by bribes to issue passes to this class of people, and on one occasion he was offered \$100 in gold to pass a certain party to the front. The offer was firmly refused, and the party turned over to the officer in charge, who sternly rebuked him for attempting to corrupt the clerk who was placed in such an important and confidential relation.

Shortly before the close of the war he resigned his clerkship with Captain Lee, A. Q. M., to accept an appointment in the Division of Referred Claims, Paymaster General's office, Washington City, under Colonel J. Sallade. Learning of his contemplated departure, the clerks of his division, who had long been associated with him, presented him with a handsome gold mounted cane.

After entering the Paymaster General's office, he only remained there a few months, when he was appointed to a first-class clerkship in the Third Auditor's office, Treasury Department, under Hon. John Wilson, and assigned to the Division of State War Claims. After about a year's service in this bureau, he was transferred to the Second Comptroller's office, Col. Broadhead, Treasury Department.

He remained in the Treasury until June 1st, 1869, when he was mustered out, after being in government employ for seven years. Soon after retiring from the Treasury Department, he removed his family to Williamsport, Pa., and accepted the managing editorship of the daily *Lycoming Gazette*, the oldest paper in

Lycoming County. He continued in this position until the 22d of November, when the paper was consolidated with the daily evening *Bulletin*, under the title of *Gazette and Bulletin*, and he was appointed city editor. In course of time Mr. E. W. Capron, the editor, retired, and he succeeded him as editor. This arrangement continued until 1872, when Col. James H. Lambert, of New York, secured an interest in the paper and became editor, when Meginness again took charge of the city department. In four years Lambert retired, when Meginness again became editor in chief. This arrangement continued until November 10, 1889, when, literally broken down with the arduous duties of his position, he resigned and retired for a year's rest. His connection with the paper extended over a continuous period of twenty years.

During 1888, in addition to his editorial labors, Mr. Meginness started and conducted a monthly magazine, entitled *The Historical Journal*. It was devoted to the publication of local history, biography and necrology, and soon attained a sufficient circulation to make it self-supporting.

In 1889, through the urgent solicitation of friends, he undertook the work of rewriting and revising his "*Otzinachson, or History of the West Branch Valley*," because the first edition, published in 1856, was entirely out of print. It made a volume of 702 octavo pages, illustrated with diagrams, maps, antiquities and portraits, and was accepted by the reviewers as a standard work, and a valuable contribution to the history of the State.

Soon after retiring from the daily newspaper, he undertook the work of writing an exhaustive biogra-

phy of Frances Slocum, the Lost Sister of Wyoming. This involved much research, besides two journeys to Peru, Indiana, to confer with the Indian descendants of Frances living on the Wabash, where she died in 1847, after being lost to friends and civilization for nearly sixty years. The work was completed and published in December, 1890. It attracted much attention, and the edition was soon exhausted.

In addition to his editorial and literary labors, he made a journey to some part of the United States nearly every year. On one occasion he extended his journey to San Francisco and other portions of California. He also visited various historic places in many parts of the United States. After a severe spell of sickness in 1881, he made a voyage to Havana,

When making these annual visits, he usually wrote a series of letters over the signature of "John of Lancaster," which were published in the *Gazette and Bulletin*.

In making these journeys, tens of thousands of miles were traveled by rail and steam-boat, and he never was in a serious accident by rail or water, and always met friends, whether on the shores of the Atlantic or Pacific, the Gulf of Mexico, the city of Havana, in other great cities, in the mountains, or on the plains.

During the last thirty years he wrote many letters and sketches for the *Philadelphia Times*, *The Press*, *Record*, *New York Herald*, *Sun*, and other journals. As early as 1855 he was a correspondent for the *Philadelphia Ledger*. And for several years he served as the telegraphic correspondent of *The Press* and *Times*, Philadelphia. In his journalistic capacity he

attended nearly every State Convention, of all parties, in Pennsylvania for eighteen years, witnessed the inauguration of half a dozen presidents, and more than that number of governors.

For forty years he lived a busy life, and while not laying claim to having accomplished anything extraordinary, he certainly labored as industriously in an humble sphere as many who have achieved great distinction. In 1891 he was engaged to prepare an elaborate history of Lycoming County for the publishing house of Brown, Runk & Company, Chicago, which he finished in the spring of 1892. And in addition to his literary labors, he occasionally found time to write an article or communication for some of his journalistic friends at home or abroad.

HIS HISTORICAL WRITINGS.

The historical works of John F. Meginness comprise more than a score of volumes. These include: Otzinachson; or, a History of the West Branch of the Susquehanna. Philadelphia, 1857. 8 vo. pp. xvi. and 518.

History, Advantages, Resources and Industries of the City of Williamsport. Map and Illustrations. Williamsport, 1886. 8 vo. pp. 87.

Otzinachson—revised and rewritten, with much new matter added. Map and Illustrations. Williamsport, 1889. 8 vo. pp. 707.

Journal of Samuel Maclay, while Assisting in the Survey of the West Branch of the Susquehanna, the Sinnemahoning and Allegheny Rivers in 1790. Annotated by John F. Meginness. Williamsport. 8 vo. pp. 63.

Biographical Annals of Deceased Residents of the West Branch Valley. Williamsport, 1889. 8 vo. pp. 272, double columns.

Murders: A curious compilation, containing a record of every murder in Lycoming County from 1795 to 1890. Williamsport. 8 vo. pp. 600.

Biography of Frances Slocum, the Lost Sister of Wyoming. Williamsport. 8 vo. pp. 246, including supplement.

Meginness Family. Williamsport, 1891. 8 vo. pp. 248.

History of Lycoming County.

History of the Borough of Butler, Pa. Royal 8 vo.

- Genealogy and History of the Hepburn Family. Portraits. Williamsport, 1894. 8 vo. pp. 186. *
- History of the Great Island and William Dunn, its Owner. Illustrated. Williamsport, 1894. 8 vo. pp. 128.
- The Historical Journal: a Monthly Record of Local History and Biography. Vol. I. 1887-88. Vol. II. 1894. Williamsport. Illustrated. 8 vo. pp. 396, 396.
- Lycoming County: Its Organization and Civil History for One Hundred Years, 1795-1895. Maps and Illustrations. Williamsport, 1895. 8 vo. pp. 82.
- History of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, Ohio. "Iron" John Thomas. Address at the Reunion of the Thomas Family. Williamsport, Aug. 20, 1896. 8 vo. pp. 17.
- Official Report of the Proceedings of the Centennial Anniversary of Lycoming County, July 2, 3 and 4, 1895. With an Account of Antiquarian Hall and Its Wonders. Maps and Illustrations. Williamsport, 1896. 8 vo. pp. 388.
- The Scotch-Irish of the Upper Susquehanna Valley. 8 vo. pp. 11. Read before the Scotch-Irish Congress at Harrisburg, June 5, 1896.
- Genealogy and History of the Descendants of Maj. Gen. Arthur St. Clair. Harrisburg, 1897. 8 vo. pp. 30.
- Annals of Montoursville, Pa. Montoursville, 1898. 8 vo. pp. 122.
- Life and Times of Robert Robb, Esq., of Muncy Township. Muncy Luminary, 1899. 8 vo. pp. 53.

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TRIBUTES IN THE PRESS.

TRAITS AS A JOURNALIST.

The relations that the deceased held as a journalist, covering upwards of forty-five years of laborious, earnest and conflicting service, alone establishes his title as a man of more than ordinary achievements. As a writer he was aggressive, fearless and combative when the occasion required, while no one was more considerate and guarded in word and expression, avoiding the infliction of pain or censure, when the subject of such a cause was under review. During a large portion of his editorial life the country was in such a feverish and exciting condition that, with many of the profession, moderation was not counted a virtue. With him, however, the most exacting tests were not allowed to carry him beyond the range of sober reason and careful consideration. The period pending the War of the Rebellion, during the five years of internecine strife and the reconstruction days, were well calculated to bring into active exercise latent talent and fruits of study and observation. Under such pressure, requiring daily use of opinions and criticism, the man of thought, energy and ambition found the task pleasant even in its exactions. Editor Meginness threw his personality, like Dana, of the *New York Sun*, into the editorial columns he controlled. There was no negative or evasive side in considering the live, vital issues as they passed under public review. He was

positive, direct and pointed. These most desirable qualifications made him produce the best possible results, the results that gave strength and influence. Method, classification and condensation, positive essentials in journalistic work, guided, governed and inspired.

The war period, when many newspaper writers suffered passion, personal hate and bitterness to poison their pen, he retained full control of his emotions. The writer of this humble notice can truly say that, although differing widely during these exciting periods in political opinions and belief, there never was a time when the hand could not be grasped with friendly feeling. When in a dark hour, when others should have extended sympathy and help, he proved a brother indeed. Beyond the tears of blood and kindred no more sincere expression of commiseration and sorrow will be extended than that of the friend of thirty-five years standing.

CHARLES T. HUSTON.

HIS WORK AS AN HISTORIAN.

John F. Meginness earned his daily bread with "the pen of a ready writer;" he also thereby earned that which few of us can hope to secure—a permanent and enduring fame. The West Branch Valley owes him a debt of gratitude that can only now be paid by the tribute time and posterity will not fail to accord his memory. His pen, following the assiduous labor of the true historian, has rescued from oblivion so much of the history and annals of this section of our Commonwealth that he has deservedly earned the fame so much his due. The infinite pains

and weary hours required to ascertain and classify the data for his many historical works alone make a stupendous task, and when he corroborated these facts, as he always did, with his graceful and facile pen, he produced works of exceeding value from an historical standpoint and forming a literature delightfully fascinating.

The trials and tribulations of the early settlers of the West Branch Valley; the massacres they suffered at the hands of their cruel neighbors; the loss of their crops and destruction of their homes; the many dangers they were compelled to undergo and the distressing incidents of their daily lives; their lack of the advantages of civilization; their courageous, God-fearing and industrious habits, and their firm determination to bring a civilization out of the wilderness, a free and enlightened government from barbarism, and to leave to those who would come after them prosperous and happy homes; all this, and much more, has been faithfully recorded by Mr. Meginness in forms accurate in detail, thorough in comprehensiveness and withal so delightful in construction and arrangement as to give us histories which will always remain of the greatest value and interest. Foremost among his productions must be placed his "Otzinachson, a History of the West Branch Valley," published in 1856 to the total exhaustion of his private means—and hence, purely a labor of love—and enlarged and re-edited in 1889. This is not only a work of historic value second to none in Pennsylvania, but furnishes reading most interesting and enjoyable. So, also, his "Frances Slocum," published in 1891, is as fascinating as any novel, while perfectly

true in every detail of facts. Besides many monographs, chiefly appearing in the public press under his nom de plume of "John of Lancaster," his "History of Lycoming County" (1892), "Biographical Annals of Deceased Residents of the West Branch Valley" (1889), and "Historical Journal of the Local History and Biography of Northwestern Pennsylvania" (1888-1894), unite with the first named in giving us in brilliant colors a photographic reproduction of the history of the West Branch Valley and of its people, both pioneer and modern.

When there has been completed the beautiful public library with which our fellow-citizen, Mr. James V. Brown, will presently so generously endow our city, it is hoped that one of its alcoves will contain the fine private library of Mr. Meginness, so rich in local histories and biographies, and thus making so excellent a memorial to our late distinguished townsman.

Years will come and go and with them will pass away our lives and our very memories, but for one there will always remain a fame, perhaps then accorded more generously than during his lifetime. No public shaft or private monuments need be graven with his name and record, for yet more enduring will be his works. When all of us are forgotten, future generations will honor his name as of one who, without hope of pecuniary reward, gave his time and means to the perpetuation of the history of his chosen home. The grateful appreciation of future generations in the West Branch Valley will be the enduring monument of John F. Meginness.

C. LA RUE MUNSON.

TRIBUTE OF A JOURNALISTIC CO-LABORER.

I was not only greatly shocked but deeply grieved upon first learning of the sudden death of Mr. John F. Meginness. Having been one of the invited guests at the recent celebration of his golden wedding, and having met and conversed with him a number of times since, his death was an event which I was not in the least expecting. I had known him well for at least thirty years, being for a long time closely associated with him in newspaper work. My first knowledge of him was gained when seeing his neatly written letters from Washington to the old *Daily Gazette* over the signature of "Druid." When, later, I met him personally, this previous knowledge made the acquaintance all the more interesting. It was through his instrumentality that I entered upon the work of newspaper reporting, and his considerate encouragement of me as a tyro was a kindness which I always remembered gratefully. The example he afforded me in accuracy and industry in the work was well worthy of careful imitation, whether I fully profited thereby or not.

During the long years of our later association it was my privilege to handle in the manuscript many of those highly interesting letters which he rained in from all points of the compass from Maine to California, from Cuba, Mexico and elsewhere. The general reader would hardly be ready to credit the statement that many of these well written epistles, filled not only with graphic descriptions, but with a liberal share of statistics and historical statements, were penned on the train while it sped along under full headway. The practical newspaper worker will ap-

preciate what acceptable "copy" they afforded when I say that they could all be given to the printer just as they reached the office, not a title or a sub-head having to be added.

I recall vividly the eagerness and promptness with which he would set out from the office if a startling piece of news came in his way. He was a tireless worker and very particular in all that he did. A careless type setter or proof reader gave him the horrors, and would disturb his equanimity quicker than anything else in his newspaper experience.

He had an extensive acquaintance among public men and enjoyed their high respect. Many of them were indebted largely to him for helping to give them prominence, something that a majority of them, though not all, expressed their acknowledgments for.

I thought I had parted with him for the last time when, by order of his physician, he started for a trip to Cuba about seventeen years ago. It pleased Providence, however, to bring him home alive and to spare him during the intervening years, enabling him to add largely to the sum of what he had previously accomplished in the way of work for the benefit of the world.

I feel a sense of personal loss in his death, and I trust that if he has not been fully appreciated by his own generation, he may hereafter be held in the estimation due to his busy and useful life.

J. J. GALBRAITH.

VIEWS OF A YOUNG EDITOR.

It is impossible for me to express the esteem in which I held John F. Meginness and the regret I feel over his sudden and unexpected death. In the field of journalism Mr. Meginness held a foremost place, and he was an example and an inspiration to those younger in years and experience. As a historian, the books which he has written speak for themselves, and will speak to future generations. The death of John F. Meginness is a great loss to the field of journalism, to the literary world, and especially to the people of Williamsport and to the entire West Branch Valley.

E. F. WOLF,
Editor Evening News.

BY J. M. M. GERNERD.

“ ‘John of Lancaster’ and his good wife richly deserve the honors heaped on them at their golden wedding. I never think of Williamsport but my heart warms up with recollections of John F. Meginness. Truthfulness and kindness are stamped all over the man, and I feel myself drawn irresistibly to him. I wished to attend his golden wedding but could not.”

These friendly words are from a private letter received from the venerable Capt. John M. Buckalew, of Columbia County, Pa., that was written a week or more before the sudden demise of our mutual friend, John F. Meginness. They are not words of praise suggested by the death of the man to whom they relate, and were not meant to be read by the public, but they were the heartfelt and spontaneous sentiments of an aged friend who well knew the worth of the man of whom he wrote—and we have taken the

liberty to use them, because they admirably express the long cherished opinion and feelings of a large circle of personal friends, who now sincerely mourn over the good man's death and deeply sympathize with his esteemed wife, and children and grandchildren. John F. Meginness was in every way just the Man his esteemed old friend and admirer of Fishing Creek thought him to be. Truthfulness and kindness were indeed "stamped all over the man."

But while this is the highest kind of praise that a man can have (since "an honest man is the noblest work of God"), the man thus eulogized was more than a good, pure, truthful, honest, kindly and loveable man. He was a very useful man, a public benefactor, a tireless worker, and by his unselfish and inadequately compensated labors reared for himself a monument that will perpetuate his name and worth better than bronze, marble or granite. As Mr. C. LaRue Munson said in an impromptu but very neat speech at the golden wedding, when the rest of us are all dead and forgotten, then John F. Meginness will be remembered and honored.

Dead? Not forever!

"No: heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive,

And (the) man's majestic beauty bloom again,

Bright thro' the eternal years of Love's triumphant
reign! "

DR. W. H. EGLE IN THE HARRISBURG TELEGRAPH.

The Editor of "Notes and Queries," on the afternoon of November 11, 1899, had a two hours' delightful visit from his friend of many years, John F. Meginness, of Williamsport, the accomplished historian of the West Branch Valley. Entertaining in his

talk, the impression he left was one of pleasure. Little thought the writer that seven hours later the Death-Angel would have stamped his seal on heart and brain. Reaching his home, perchance somewhat excited, he suddenly fell over dead. The shock at this sudden termination of a brilliant earthly career cannot be described. It was only a few weeks prior (October 25, 1899,) that he bade his friends to the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of his wedding. Living beyond three-score and ten, his apparent good health gave promise of a few more years of historic labor and usefulness. Verily it is well, that while the day is here that one works with his might, lest no other dawn on him. Mr. Meginness was an indefatigable delver. He made his researches conscientiously—and truth was his sole aim in historic lore. He accomplished much—he preserved for the years to come great treasure-houses of history, biography and genealogy. If there is any one in the entire West Branch Valley who dare step in his shoes let him come forth. Mr. Meginness was a perfect encyclopedia of West Branch history—and this was only gathered through almost fifty years of quiet, faithful delving. Shall we look upon his like again? No, not in this decade nor in the next. Founded upon the data he gathered, the writers for the years to come must depend upon the unrequited labors of that man of toil, of erudition, and research. One by one the scribes of the historic past are going out from the homes of the living. Within the past two years Pennsylvania has lost many gifted in this field of literature, Frederick D. Stone, William S. Baker, John Blair Linn, Dallas Albert, and others—a bright

array of the literati of our Commonwealth—while within the month the galaxy of stars has been dimmed by the death of Isaac Craig, Dr. John G. Brinton, Dr. W. J. Hoffman and John F. Meginness. Others may—nay, will—rise up and take their places, but these shall thrive on the legacies left them by the reapers who have gathered up their sheaves. Few of the people of to-day properly appreciate the excellent services of these men of letters, yet the work of their brain will live long after the sensational literature of the present shall be remanded to a deserved oblivion.

In conclusion, we are all aware that every workman must have tools. Mr. Meginness gathered, during his lifetime, an exceedingly valuable library of local history, and we know that it was one of his fondest wishes that this should be kept intact. We hope this may be done, and that the liberal citizens of Williamsport will see that it is not scattered to the four winds of heaven. They ought to secure it for their city, as they could pay no greater tribute to his worth and services. It will form the nucleus of a public library which will increase in value as the years roll on.

TRIBUTE OF A FRIEND.

In the death of John F. Meginness the community has lost a man of almost inestimable value to it. While his passing away is deplored by all who realize the importance of the sphere he filled so admirably, yet it is not as though all the treasures of his rare mind were lost to us. In his *History of the West Branch Valley, History of Lycoming County,*

of different family histories, and other writings, he has reared a monument to himself that will be lasting. Few men are gifted with the patience and persistence, requisite in a historian, as was Mr. Meginess. In his history he has left behind him a work which had never been attempted before in this section, and is not likely to be improved upon in the future. His mental traits were of a high order, and his naturally fine literary tastes were cultivated by the reading and study of the best class of books, of which he owned a choice collection.

Ever thoughtful of others, his nature was kind as a woman's. His wife was the recipient of a devotion which is seldom seen among men. May He who marks the sparrow's fall comfort her grief-stricken heart in this hour of sorrow; to the children bereft of a kind and loving father the consolations of His grace.

With a very sad heart I lay these few words as a shadow of a wreath of lilies and laurels on the memory of one of the noblest, truest, and best friends I ever had.

CHARLES B. SEELY.

FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

[*Wednesday, November 15, 1899.*]

Funeral services were held at Pine Street M. E. Church, at 10 A. M., and were conducted by the Pastor, Rev. J. B. Shaver. Eulogistic addresses were delivered by Rev. E. J. Gray, D. D., and C. La Rue Munson, Esq. The interment was in the cemetery at Jersey Shore, Pa., the burial service at the grave being read by Rev. J. B. Shaver.

PALL BEARERS.

HONORARY.

C. B. Seely,	Dietrick Lamade,
M. J. Bernauer,	Fred M. Lamade,
H. H. Rutter,	F. E. Manson,
T. B. Painter,	E. E. Person,
J. J. Galbraith,	John Budd,
Carl Tewell,	G. M. Robinson,
O. S. Brown,	E. M. Sigfried,
T. P. Whaley,	E. F. Wolf,
G. Bert Repasz,	W. P. Clarke,
W. G. Talley,	H. F. Richards,
Howard Galbraith,	James W. Sweely,
Luke Greevy,	Geo. S. Maxwell,

S. V. Border.

ACTIVE.

John R. Hazelet,	J. R. Stead,
Lewis Sheffer,	G. W. Harder.

PALL BEARERS AT JERSEY SHORE.

H. B. Humes,	J. S. Childs,
Robert McCullough,	D. A. Bingman,
Joseph Wood,	F. T. Wilson.

ADDRESS BY REV. E. J. GRAY, D. D.

“We meet to-day in the presence of a real and a great sorrow. Our hearts are deeply moved; tears come unbidden to our eyes and a sense of personal grief steals into our minds as we sit in silence and think of the loss we have sustained.

“A man has suddenly left us to return to us no more—yes—a manly man—but more than that—a neighbor has been taken from us without a moment’s warning or a word from the great Disposer of human events that he was wanted elsewhere. Yes, a neighborly neighbor—but more than that—a friend has quickly gone out of the circle in which he has moved for half a century, leaving a vacancy which can never be filled. Yes, a friend—but more than that.

“A man, a neighbor, a friend—answering to all these names and relations in the highest sense was he about whose bier we sadly gather this solemn hour.

“But he was, with all these and beyond all these, our distinguished fellow citizen—one of the men of whom our city is justly proud.

“Ordinarily the near relatives and a few personal friends comprise the ‘mourners’ at a funeral. But the dispensation which brings us together in this sacred place touches the whole community and projects its sombre shadow into many other communities where men and women will grieve as we grieve, and feel and endeavor to measure their great loss as we feel and endeavor to measure our loss to-day.

“Widely known by his relations to journalism and by his literary work, and highly esteemed wherever known, the death of John F. Meginness will create

a feeling of personal bereavement, not only in this city and county, where his friends are numbered by thousands, but in all parts of the state as well, while at the Capital of the nation many will mourn his departure.

“Unobtrusive, without ostentation, never self-seeking, never claiming political position or honor as a reward for service rendered to principle or person or party, he made a unique place for himself and filled that place with such distinguished ability and yet with such absence of self-appreciation which often blossoms into pride and fruits into arrogance—that his steadily growing power—his constantly widening influence in the field he chose to cultivate, as editor, as correspondent and as historian, he awakened no animosity born of partisan antagonism, but won the admiration and commanded the respect even of party foes.

“And yet he was not a weak man or a weak writer, pliant or compromising. His was a vigorous pen, a strong pen, a keen pen, against what he believed to be wrong, a trenchant pen, cutting to the very marrow, but withal and always a kind pen, a generous pen, a pen that freely accorded merit where it was found, though not on the side of the question he advocated.

“John F. Meginness was an educated man in the best sense of that often misunderstood term, largely self-educated, but well educated nevertheless. The faculties of mind and heart drawn out, enlarged, expanded along such lines of thought as brought harmonious co-operation of the mental and moral powers, so that his profoundest intellections were al-

ways strongly ethical, expressed the best and highest type of culture.

"No man can read what he has written, whether in ephemeral newspaper correspondence, or in concisely wrought editorials, or in the wider and more difficult realm of history, and not be deeply impressed with the conviction that in those arts of composition which arrest attention, and awaken thought, and stir the emotions and stimulate the imagination, making reading a delight by what it brings, he was indeed a master.

"John F. Meginness was an unusually intelligent man. He was not only conversant with subjects of practical and general interest which come into the daily life of the community, but he made excursions, as writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth century would express it, into nearly all realms that allure a mind alert to its opportunities and disposed to investigate for itself. While in general literature, sacred and secular, in science, in art, in sociology, and in the various economies which find place or utility in organized society, he would not have reckoned himself an expert, yet in accurate, definite knowledge in all these departments he was far beyond the average literary man, and in the sphere in which he selected to 'labor for posterity,' to express it in his own phrase, he easily ranked among the very best.

"Diligent, studious, patient, painstaking to the last degree, untiring, insatiable in his search for the exact truth, not content until he knew personally by actual contact with the facts he recorded, his histories will become more and more authoritative,

more and more valuable as the years go by, forming the solid, abiding foundation upon which shall be built an enduring fame.

“John F. Meginness was a remarkably sagacious man. I do not use this term in the sense of shrewdness, because that implies qualities of mind, or rather of heart, by which he was not characterized. Rather in the sense of that far-sighted wisdom which, from various knowledges acquired from various sources, only slightly related, might be deduced the right conclusion. He was a fair man, hence the bias of narrow prejudice did not obscure his vision, nor warp his judgment.

“He studied men and measures as well as things. He knew the public history of a large proportion of the public men of his day and the personal life of many of them. He studied the probable motives that actuated men in public station with a mind open to receive the truth, and as a consequence he exhibited rare wisdom in reading character.

“He knew more professional men, lawyers, doctors, preachers, teachers, literary men than almost any other man of my acquaintance. There was hardly a man whose achievements were of any value to the world in Central Pennsylvania with whose history and work he was not familiar, and in frequent conversations I observed that he spoke of the better side of their life and work, manifesting a kindly charity which seemed to cover up and forget their faults and foibles and to hold in memory only their virtues and the good they had done.

“John F. Meginness was a broad-minded, generous-hearted man. Magnanimous is a better word because

it better expresses what I regard as the most conspicuous trait in his character.

"Etymologically it means soul-greatness; freedom from petty, mean and ignoble motives and feelings, and filled with generous impulses which find scope in chivalrous thought and deed. If one virtue more than any other dominated the life of our departed friend it was a chivalrous magnanimity which sought expression always toward all about him in charitable words and brotherly acts.

"In an acquaintance growing more intimate and personal with the lapse of years, and stretching across a quarter of a century, including frequent conversations upon all current topics, and upon all questions which touch the life and weal of the community and the state, and upon public measures and men coming into review by their relation to the public good, I do not recall that the lips of John F. McGinness ever framed into speech one harsh or unkind word concerning any human being.

"The noble man whose sudden departure we all so sincerely mourn did not leave large accumulations of money to his wife and children, but he left that which is far better. The word of God asserts that 'a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.'

"You whose hearts are broken to-day and whose home is desolate because one who filled heart and home with the light and cheer and love of a provident husband and a tender father has gone out from your sight and embrace, have the rich heritage of an honored name. In the community where he was best known; in the city where he spent the larger

part of a long and useful life, no name is more honored, more eminent for those manly virtues which, standing for nobility of character, are the proudest and most precious legacy of wife and children, than the name of John F. Meginness."

ADDRESS BY C. LA RUE MUNSON, ESQ.

C. La Rue Munson, Esq., delivered a beautiful eulogy. He had known the deceased for many years. When the speaker first came to this city a boy, he had occasion to visit the editorial room in which Mr. Meginness was engaged in work. He had the natural fear of the editor, a great personage, and he approached him with mingled feelings. The hearty greeting accorded him remained a bright spot in memory ever since and the advice and help he received was of vast benefit. He referred to the deceased as a historian and a journalist and of the great work he had accomplished in life without one thought of pecuniary gain. He was truly working for future generations and his is a name that will never be forgotten.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC MEETING.

Following the funeral ceremonies at the church a public meeting was held at the City Hall. J. J. Galbraith was chosen chairman and T. P. Whaley secretary.

The following resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, In view of the loss that we, as members of the journalistic profession, have sustained by the decease of our friend and associate, John F. Meginness, and of the still heavier loss sustained by those who were nearest and dearest to him, be it

Resolved, That it is but a just tribute to the memory of the departed to say that in regretting his sudden removal from our midst we mourn for one who was in every way worthy of our respect and regard; and

Resolved, That in the death of John F. Meginness the newspaper profession loses a foremost member; we, his associates in that profession, a brother who was ever ready to proffer the hand of assistance and to impart advice that long experience made ripe with wisdom; a friend and companion who was dear to us all; the community a citizen whose upright and noble life was a standard of emulation to his fellows; and

Resolved, That we testify to his indefatigable labors as a historian, by which he leaves posterity a priceless legacy, an appreciation of which must become the stronger as time rolls on; and

Resolved, That we deeply sympathize with the venerable widow of our departed associate, and all other members of the bereaved family.

REMARKS BY E. E. PERSON.

“It is written that ‘Peace hath her victories no less than war.’ It is just as beautifully, just as impressively true that peace has her heroes no less than war. To-day we mourn one of these.

“By the death of Mr. Meginness the Nestor of newspaperdom in the West Branch Valley has been re-

moved; there has gone from among us a man who, by his years of labor as a historian, had long since become a public benefactor, and by this same ceaseless toil has made for himself a name that is indelibly inscribed upon the scroll of time, to be honored and praised by future generations.

"But to-day I am especially desirous of paying a word of tribute to the memory of Mr. Meginness as a friend—as a friend and adviser of the young newspaper men. In him, as have the other young men of the profession, I often found a tutor whose advice was golden; always given with that carefulness of detail and kindness of spirit that characterizes a father when imparting knowledge to his son.

"Upon the grave of John F. Meginness no tear will fall freighted with keener sorrow than that of the young newspaper man; upon the tablet of no memory will there be engraved a sweeter remembrance than is cherished in the hearts of the 'boys' who, having taken up the profession which he himself had dignified and elevated, he stood ever ready to help on to success."

REMARKS BY J. J. GALBRAITH.

"In meeting to-day to give some expression to our grief over the death and our regard for the memory of John F. Meginness, we feel that we are called upon to mourn the departure of a leading citizen as well as an able journalist and historian.

"Mr. Meginness had been an active and vital part of the life and progress of Williamsport for 30 years. His residence here was co-equal with the life of daily

journalism in the city. For some time past the project has been under consideration of having a meeting of the men who were identified with the first daily papers of the city and he was prominently recognized in that number.

"To-day we mourn over his almost tragic death. We miss him as a citizen; we miss him as a journalist; we especially miss him as a friend.

"In this community the words are eminently true that were spoken of Hamilton: 'His was a life in which all had an interest.'

"It was not alone because he was a journalist and historian that he was held in such high repute,—there are many journalists and historians,—but it is because in these capacities and in all other respects he was faithful, earnest and ever true to duty. He never spared himself. He was a thoroughly conscientious laborer. He would allow no poor manuscript to pass through his hands. I have known him to laboriously transcribe lengthy articles in order that accuracy, which was with him such an important matter, might be assured. He would repeatedly rewrite many of his own productions until he could get them to suit his rigid requirements.

"He possessed a resolute character. He was not easily daunted. The same indomitable spirit that sustained him when he marched as a boy, bearing his musket, from Vera Cruz to the capital of the Montezumas, animated him when facing every great difficulty which confronted him throughout life.

"No man long retains a higher place among his professional contemporaries than he is entitled to, and Mr. Meginness did not have to die before obtain-

ing generous acknowledgment of his sterling qualities from the newspaper men who knew him best.

"He was a true journalist, and the journalist is the highest type of public man. A man who fully measures up to the best standard in this sphere has attained to exalted dignity, honor and usefulness.

"Very few among those who are prone to speak slightly of editors have any conception of the high type of integrity that obtains with the best class of journalists. The men of no other calling have their professional integrity so often or so severely subjected to test.

"The world may well be congratulated that the majority of editors are so much truer men than they are deemed to be by unthinking people.

"We all feel deeply the death of our friend. We recognize, however, the stern truth that 'death has passed upon all.' It must be a fact that the death of an individual is intended by the Supreme Director of events not only to remind surviving friends and associates that death will also be their portion, but to stimulate them to earnest and habitual striving in the direction of making their lives effective in their own behalf as well as instrumental in helping upward all the rest of humanity.

"The death of our friends has an influence upon us as great if not greater than that of their lives. The closer the friendship between us has been, the more marked to us is the vacancy caused by its final severance.

"As each friend is cut down by our side we are led to recall the time we have spent together and to indulge in vain regrets that we did not do more while

the opportunity was ours to lighten and brighten the life of the departed.

“All that remains possible for us is to truly cherish the memory of the one that has gone, and to profit as best we may from whatever there was in such life and character capable of yielding to us good.”

REMARKS BY H. H. RUTTER.

Hon. H. H. Rutter, editor of the *Muncy Democrat*, said that he held the deceased in the highest esteem. He had got to know him well in Mr. Meginness' search after historical data, in which quest the speaker had been able to render some little assistance.

REMARKS BY M. J. BERNAUER.

M. J. Bernauer, of the *Cammal Pioneer*, expressed himself as knowing Mr. Meginness only by reputation. He came to Williamsport to hear more of the life-work of the beloved editor and historian, and was glad that he had done so.

REMARKS BY DIETRICK LAMADE.

“In paying tribute to the memory of John F. Meginness I can find no language that conveys the high regard in which I held him. In his death every newspaper man in the city has lost a friend—a friend the like of whom is found but once in a lifetime. The remembrance of him shall be cherished on memory's fondest page, and his good deeds are most worthy examples of emulation.

"During the quarter of a century that I have known Mr. Meginness I learned to esteem him as a friend whose advice was a handmaiden to success, and whose words were a sure passport over untried paths. His own ripe experience has on countless occasions proven of vast benefit to me. It was that unselfish, neighborly, indeed I might say fatherly trait, that readiness to extend a helping hand, that made of Mr. Meginness a friend of all who sought his counsel.

"While I do remember in our early history, when helping friends were needed, his encouragement shed a gleam of light along a rugged pathway and his interest in the welfare of our paper and ourselves made smooth many of the rough places in the way. His suggestions, his advice, his opinions, given with that generosity that always characterized him, proved fruitful with good results. I have known him to stop in his own work to write for us an article which in his keen discernment and ripe judgment he saw was needed.

"He seemed always to regard his own interests as secondary in his unselfish desire to help others, and the amount of kindness shown his associates in the journalistic profession is beyond measurement. This alone is a monument of endearment that shall be perpetuated in the hearts of his late fellow workers until they, too, have followed him into the great beyond."

REMARKS BY F. E. MANSON.

"I would like to pay my humble tribute to Mr. Meginness as a man, a journalist and a historian. As a man he possessed an abundance of those qualities

which compel recognition from all who admire manliness. He was straightforward, possessed singleness of purpose, was regardful of the rights of others and of his obligations to his fellow-men and to society in general; was unselfish, generous to a fault, and was happiest when he was instrumental in making others happy. As a journalist he was ever mindful of the duty the profession owes to the public, which spurred him onward to the undertakings that he would otherwise have avoided. In all professional tasks he possessed the courage of his convictions, which gave force to his utterances and brought results. His mind and pen never fell behind the rapidly ensuing events and changing conditions, and his advice to the young men of the profession was always strictly in accordance with the demands of the times, and, fortified by abundant experience, together with complete knowledge of present affairs, was always most valuable. As a historian Mr. Meginness must ever be credited with having rescued from probable oblivion the story of the settlement, early events transpiring in, and progress of this West Branch Valley; and of having preserved in a comprehensive and authoritative form an account that will live through and keenly interest many succeeding generations. From a literary standpoint Mr. Meginness' historical works will always receive commendation.

“As a man, a journalist and a historian, Mr. Meginness will live with us for many years to come, not in the flesh, it is true, but in the influences which he will continue to exert upon us.”

REMARKS BY J. W. SWEELY.

"There is little that I or any of us here can say or do that will add to the many deserved tributes that have been paid to John F. Meginness or enhance the measure of his fame. I do want to say, however, that I believe his work is better appreciated by the people than we may think, and, as the years go by, and its importance becomes better comprehended, this appreciation will increase. As Victor Hugo says, 'The rain effaces, the grass hides;' but no tombstone to John F. Meginness can ever be erected from which the rain of oblivion will efface or the grass of neglect hide the fame of which his imperishable and useful local history is the foundation. It is only natural that strong men are never quite fully appreciated in their own time. Cromwell's early biographers doubted whether he was not the greatest scoundrel in England, and now John Morley, his latest biographer, is making him out a saint and his revolution and reformation the salvation of the freedom of the English-speaking peoples.

"Mr. Meginness and his work are appreciated, as the profound regret for his departure, shown by his fellow newspaper men and this community, testify. He was a good man, a pure man, an honest man, a force of great power to his generation, and the world is better because he lived in it. I consider it a high honor that I could call him my friend—because he was one who took a real and useful interest in his friends."

REMARKS BY O. S. BROWN.

"Through a period of a quarter of a century have I known the late John F. Meginness, and all that has

been uttered regarding him, both here and at the edifice we have just left, I can most heartily endorse. I, as an employer, can readily appreciate such a man as John F. Meginness. He was capable, of unbounded capacity and extreme newspaper activity. As a reporter, editor and a man he was careful to detail, conscientious, scrupulously neat in phrase and point. He neglected nothing. He was gifted with almost a second sight, so clear and penetrating was his view of coming events. His forecasts were seldom reversed by facts, unless his pen had tripped some scheme concocted for some one's private gain and not public good. His pen was a terror to the evil, a blessing to the pure. To you of a fraternity whose works are known to the public only by their results, I can say of John F. Meginness that which none outside of your profession can as readily appreciate—he was a safe man. Once define a policy and you could trust his pen for the rest. Personally I feel his loss."

REMARKS BY W. P. CLARKE.

"There is doubtless no one in the newspaper profession in this county who has not long since recognized in John F. Meginness a leader in the particular lines of work which he followed. He was the man of men to whom the newspaper man could turn and feel assured in doing so that the information, the advice was freely given. Kind, generous, ever ready to assist, he was the friend of everybody and never more happy than when doing something to assist another.

"He was thoroughly unselfish, and from his boyhood days lived not for himself but for others. As a

youth he devoted himself to his country and joined her forces in Mexico, later in public positions, in the civil war, in his journalistic experiences and his historical work there was a sinking of self and a laboring for the public good.

"We who knew him appreciated him and appreciated the works which he left as a legacy to posterity. But those who knew him can never appreciate him as will the generations who can never know him but know of him through his works.

"Tireless, energetic, never knowing absolute failure, he spent hours, days among the musty papers in the vaults of the court house, and the time-worn and faded pages in its vaults, often to find that what he was tracing was valueless and data desired must be searched for in some other quarter. Disappointed but not disheartened, another start is made and the goal eventually reached. Only one who has followed such researches can know the trials, disappointments, hard labor which his work entailed.

"Though he has left rich historical volumes behind him, he has also left a wealth of manuscripts, clippings and data for other works which, had life been spared him, he would have given us in finished volumes.

"It seemed a fitting though a sad ending to this busy life that it should close as it did. His chief desire in recent months was to live to celebrate his golden wedding. This accomplished, he would be ready to go. But a few weeks ago we assisted in that celebration and remember still the pleasure with which he and his estimable wife received our congratulations. The day was over, but another duty remained

to make it complete—the preparing of the ‘Golden Wedding Book.’ At last it is done and, with happiness written on his countenance, he hurries home to give it to his family. It is the crowning act of the golden wedding, and as he hands it to them, with his finger on its title page, his marriage certificate, the angel of death called him away. May it find all of us as ready to answer the summons.”

REMARKS BY T. P. WHALEY.

“I wish to say but one word regarding appreciation. Much has been said of the appreciation in which both the public and the individual hold the late John F. Meginness, but no reference has yet been made to the appreciation he felt for the work done under his direction. The only time in which I was associated with him in the slightest degree in information gathering was while he was compiling a history of this county. I was asked by him to secure some data on industries. He gave me a week in which to complete the work. In 24 hours, with the aid of my bicycle, I was enabled to cover considerable territory, gather and deliver my information. For this work he presented me with two of his books. I was well repaid. I have read and enjoyed them and they occupy a choice position in my library. He has given me good advice and I hope that I have profited by it.”

REMARKS BY J. F. GOOD.

J. F. Good, of Renovo, said that he was a boyhood friend of Mr. Meginness, having been born in an adjoining township in Lancaster County. They grew to manhood together and had always been great friends.

REMARKS BY FRED M. LAMADE.

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen: When on last Saturday evening the soul of that veteran journalist and historian, John F. Meginness, took its flight this community especially, and in fact the entire state of Pennsylvania, sustained an irreparable loss and the newspaper makers a true friend and loyal counsellor. As a journalist Mr. Meginness adorned and dignified the profession. At no time in his long newspaper career did he stoop to anything undignified or ungentlemanly. Even had he ever been requested (and what writer or editor has not?) to pen anything that would reflect either on his profession or on the publication on which he was engaged, it would have been beneath his character and integrity to have even assented to such publication, much less to have an active part in the preparation of anything beneath his idea of what should appear in public print. His idea of a good newspaper was one that would elevate, enlighten and instruct. He wanted cleanliness. A thing that was not clean and wholesome for his readers was not fit for the columns which he prepared. His cheerfulness at all times to the younger newspaper men with whom he came in contact will never be forgotten by the newspaper fraternity in this region, and his kind and sympathetic words of encouragement to many a young man has softened more than once the hard road of adversity, and his good advice turned that same road in a prosperous and successful direction."

REMARKS BY C. K. GEDDES, ESQ.

Charles K. Geddes, Esq., testified to the integrity and the intellectual and moral character of Mr. Me-

ginness, whom he had known for 30 years. It was through the reading of the historical works of the deceased that the speaker was led to locate in Williamsport. He concluded by prophesying that a monument would some day be erected by the people of Lycoming County to the memory of Mr. Meginness.

REMARKS BY W. W. CHAMPION, ESQ.

W. W. Champion, Esq., said that the work performed by Meginness as a historian was of inestimable value to the people of this county. He recommended that an effort be made to preserve intact the library collected by Mr. Meginness. He said the books written by the deceased, and especially the information gathered and as yet unpublished, was too valuable to be lost and should be so placed that future local writers would have free access to them.

HE LOVED "THE BOYS."

John Budd said: "It was Mr. Meginness' custom, when visiting newspaper offices, to inquire after 'all the boys.'

"He was our friend,
'Mid greater aims
And mighty deeds,
Grant space to this one thought.

"We freely lend
Both mind and voice
In tribute meet to memory sweet
Of him, who loved
'The boys.'"

PRESS COMMENTS.

[From *Grit*, Williamsport, Pa., Nov. 12, 1899.]

It is sad news that *Grit* conveys to its readers this morning in the announcement of the sudden death last evening of John F. Meginness; peculiarly sad in view of the recent happy celebration by him and his estimable wife of the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding, in which so many friends and acquaintances participated. And it is strangely co-incident with this happy event that Mr. Meginness should expire with his finger on the title page of a newly-bound volume containing the letters of congratulation and regret received on that occasion, which gave him so much satisfaction.

It is almost impossible to believe that one apparently so robust and vigorous should be so suddenly cut off; and the suddenness of the sad event will shock thousands of people who have for many years known and respected Mr. Meginness as a man, esteemed him as a journalist, and extolled him as a historian. His life work, a large part of which was done in the hope of increasing the knowledge of his fellow men, stands as a monument to perseverance, enterprise and energy without which he could not have overcome the obstacles he did. His work was well done, and, mingled with the sorrow which his death will cause, will be sincere praise for the accomplishments which will perpetuate his name.

[From the *Gazette and Bulletin*, Williamsport, Pa., Nov. 13, 1899.]

Mr. John F. Meginness, who less than three weeks ago celebrated with such interesting ceremonies his golden wedding anniversary, passed suddenly from earthly joys and sorrows on Saturday night last. While congratulations upon the happy anniversary were still reaching him, his earthly career was abruptly closed.

His death, which under any circumstances would have been deplored by all who knew him, has by reason of its tragic suddenness fallen like a thunder-clap upon the public.

He had lived beyond the scriptural three-score and ten limit, and long as was his life, it was as busy as it was extended. Not many fully realized what a strong character has been going in and out among us. He was a man of unusual energy, industry and application. He was most persistent and indefatigable in the pursuit of any work in which he was engaged. As a journalist he displayed great zeal, care and thoroughness. It was a matter of constant thought with him never to keep printers waiting for copy. Well known as he was for his historical labors, very few were aware of the vast amount of work which he performed in the collection of the materials for his historical publications. He deemed nothing too difficult to be accomplished in this line.

He took great pride in Williamsport and was ever ready to do anything within his power to advance the city's interests. His death removes from her population a citizen who aided materially in extending her good name and to whom she owed a debt of gratitude of no small dimensions.

There will be genuine mourning over his taking off. That mourning will not be confined to this city, nor even to this state. The journalists of Williamsport will deeply regret the dispensation that will take from them his presence and the benignant and inspiring influence of his personality.

The *Gazette and Bulletin*, whose editorial columns he so long and so capably managed, desires to pay a tender tribute to his memory and to offer its sincere sympathy and consolation to his deeply afflicted family and kindred. They have the comforting reflection that throughout his long and active career he never failed to "quit him like a man."

[From *The Sun*, Williamsport, Pa., Nov. 13, 1899.]

The death of John F. Meginness will come with a greater shock to none outside his family than his local newspaper contemporaries, by whom his life-work was, for obvious reasons, intelligently appreciated and his warm and genial personality understood. His death is a loss to the entire community, and is particularly pathetic in view of the recent celebration of his golden wedding, still fresh in the public mind, when he looked to me not a whit older than at any time these five years past. As a citizen, Mr. Meginness enjoyed a character above reproach; as an editor and historian, his work speaks for itself and will continue to speak when all now living are silent.

The friendly interest which he exhibited toward the younger newspaper men of this city and valley, the concern which he felt in their work and welfare, of which I am pleased to say I have had personal knowl-

edge during my acquaintance of ten years with him, was a most estimable trait of his unselfish character.

What impressed me most about Mr. Meginness as an editor and a writer was his prodigious industry and his uncompromising desire and insistence for accuracy. He was an indefatigable worker and, in his historical researches, as he once told me, had read pages of old, dry, musty archives in our court house here, and in fact in all the county seats of the West Branch Valley, as well as at the state capitol, in order to secure historical information or verify a fact which, when written out in his work, would perhaps not occupy more than four or five lines. A loose statement or an uncertain one, unverified, when susceptible of proof, was his special detestation, and this is one reason why his local historical work is so important and so valuable.

Although retired from active journalistic work in recent years, his pen was never idle, and he retained to the end that interest in journalism which is peculiar to all newspaper men. Mr. Meginness, I know, had a lively appreciation of the increased exactions of modern journalism, and realized that conservatism, by reason of the fierce competition that has developed and the rapidity with which events now crowd upon each other, has yielded in degree to a preescience that must sacrifice something to accuracy. "The editor of to-day," he once said to me, "must not only know what happens to-day; he must know more: he must be able to look ahead and know what is going to happen to-morrow." This paradox shows how keenly he perceived the change that progress has wrought in the unsparing and nerve-grinding demands of the profession he loved so well.

Mr. Meginness, besides his tireless energy and industry, possessed a vigorous, concise style, and a comprehensive grasp of his subjects apparent in the many details of his historical work. He abhorred anything sensational or artificial, and his diction was as rugged as his own sturdy self, dominated by a solid Scotch tenacity of intuitive direction, as his vigorous body was dominated by the sound Scotch blood which coursed through it and of which he was so proud. A man of deep convictions, formed after careful and mature deliberation, he could generally be depended upon to assert and maintain them with all the argumentative vigor of which he was capable, regardless of results; and nobody can help but admire that kind of a man. Removed by his semi-retirement of later years from the acrimonies and amenities of the editorial harness, he occupied a unique position in this city—admired by his contemporaries, of whose interests he was always so thoughtful, and esteemed by the whole community for his beautiful and simple life, as well as his valuable contributions to the local history of the valley, which will be his enduring monument. He was one of our foremost citizens, and in accordance with his usefulness and the real permanent value of the services of his life as they affect the community in which he lived, was, I feel safe in saying, the most prominent local force of his generation.

JAMES W. SWEELY.

[From *The Evening News*, Williamsport, Pa., Nov. 13, 1899.]

John F. Meginness is dead. A busy, useful life has calmly and peacefully closed. The hand which was so well known throughout the state and which was

known to everybody in Lycoming County, has laid down its pen for the last time and has put it away forever.

John F. Meginness is dead. Beloved by all who knew him, respected by everybody, at enmity with none, he has passed from among us.

For more than 30 years Mr. Meginness has been prominently identified with the journalism of this city and has been its chief representative in the literary field. He occupied a place which was peculiarly his own, and his researches gave him a most thorough acquaintance with the early history and people of this locality. He was a walking encyclopedia of local history and was ever ready to impart his knowledge to those who sought it.

The works which his ready pen has left contain all that is known of the early history of the West Branch Valley and will live as books of reference long after those who knew him in his lifetime have joined him in the great beyond. He has builded his own greatest monument with his pen and has written his name indelibly across the West Branch Valley, where future generations who knew him not cannot but see it.

The author of many books of history, local to this and other places, it was his oft-repeated wish that he might be able to live to write for his descendants the story of the celebration of the golden wedding of himself and Mrs. Meginness. His wish was gratified. The anniversary was celebrated October 25 last, and Mr. Meginness returned from Sunbury Saturday night, bearing the book which the binder had that day delivered to him. He went to his home, opened the package and with his finger upon his marriage

certificate, the title page of this, his last work, his life went out.

His work was done, its culmination was reached, the volume he had wished to live to write was completed, he was ready to go, and with his going Williamsport lost a citizen whose place will be difficult to fill, one who will be greatly missed.

[From *The Pennsylvania Methodist.*]

On Saturday afternoon last Mr. John F. Meginness, of Williamsport, was in Harrisburg, and as was his wont paid a visit to the Book Rooms, where he was always a welcome caller. Then, despite his more than three-score years and ten, he was in health, his eye was bright, his step firm, his spirit joyous, and his conversation full of interest. He bought several books, talked of the recent celebration of the 50th anniversary of his marriage, and left Harrisburg at 4 o'clock, after having bidden what proved to be his last good-bye to a number of old friends.

That evening, while examining an account of the golden wedding ceremonies which had been published, he suddenly died at his residence. The shock is a severe one, for to know John F. Meginness was to admire and love him. He was born 72 years ago in the township of Colerain, Lancaster County. He worked on his father's farm during the earlier years of his life, had not many advantages of education, but had naturally a strong and active brain. He possessed a martial spirit and served in the regular army during the Mexican War. Upon his return from that struggle, and after his honorable discharge from the United States service, he settled in Lycoming County,

where he was married and for more than fifty years had been an honored resident of that section of Pennsylvania.

When the *Philadelphia Press* was started in 1858 by the late Colonel John W. Forney, Mr. Meginness became a regular contributor to that paper over the signature of "John of Lancaster." And only on Saturday in a pleasant and jocular manner he told the writer how he came to use that nom de plume. The late William C. Tobey was a celebrated war correspondent of the *North American* and other Philadelphia papers during the Mexican war over the signature of "John of York." He also published a paper in the City of Mexico during its occupancy by the American troops. Mr. Meginness was a great friend of Mr. Tobey's, and the idea suggested itself that as there had been a "John of York" in newspaper circles, a "John of Lancaster" was eminently appropriate. Mr. Meginness' contributions to the *Press* always commanded much attention and were frequently republished in other papers.

For a number of years he had been editor-in-chief of the *Williamsport Gazette and Bulletin*, and gave that paper a position of importance among the journals of Pennsylvania. Of late years he had been engaged in the compilation and publication of many works, bibliographical and otherwise. But a few months ago he finished a history of the State of Delaware, and was engaged to prepare one on Lancaster County, which is in contemplation. His work on the Lycoming County Centennial in 1895 is a standard authority. He was painstaking and careful, wrote with ease and fluency, and weighed well all his

sources of information before giving them publicity.

But a few days ago he commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of his marriage, which was made the occasion of a very pleasant event by his old friends and neighbors. A large number gathered at his place of residence, and his aged wife and himself were the recipients of many happy remembrances.

John F. Meginness was an honest man and a devout believer in the Christian religion. He is gone. The condolence of many friends all over the state will be freely extended his stricken and bereaved wife and family. During seven years of pastoral service in Williamsport the writer found him always the same kind, genial, accommodating, brotherly brother, and feels deeply the loss sustained. Only four or five hours could have elapsed between his visit to the Book Rooms and his departure for his eternal home. Surely "in the midst of life we are in death." "After life's fitful fever he sleeps well." Vale et vale to the sturdy old editor, correspondent and bibliographer.

[From *The Telegraph*, Harrisburg, Nov. 13, 1899.]

It may be said of John F. Meginness, the veteran journalist and historian, who passed away in Williamsport on Saturday night, that he died in the harness. Had he lived many more years before laying down life's burden, he would not have considered his life work ended. He was a most indefatigable worker, and always for the good of those who were interested more than himself in his work. Entering journalism when a young man, he received that best of all trainings for the active newspaper man—the

training of a country printing office, and this splendid training showed in all the work of his after years. He was one of the moulders of public opinion in the West Branch region for many years, and to his credit be it said that he never advocated an unworthy cause or taught his people that might was right. He was always in the right, and he plodded along year after year doing his duty nobly until advancing years caused him to retire with honors. It was his activity as a historian—his collection and collation of facts in the history of Pennsylvania affairs and families to which he was especially devoted. His historical works are classics, strictly accurate as to facts—facts gained after long and patient research, and it was said of him that he never quit his subject until he had thoroughly exhausted it, and there was nothing more to say. It is this that made his work indescribably valuable from a historical point of view, and gained for him a place among Pennsylvania historians that it will be hard to fill. It is a pleasure to record that in some historical matters he was so thorough that nothing remains to be done, and that future generations will have completeness in many things when in search of information. The archives of Pennsylvania were a favorite study with Mr. Meginness, but it was not always to the written paper that he confined himself. He met people, those of by-gone generations, and from them he learned much of historical value that he published for the benefit of posterity. That his merits were recognized is attested by the high esteem in which he was held by men in all circles of life. Best of all, he was beloved by his neighbors, those whom he met in every-day

life, and knew him intimately. The kindly, gentlemanly soul was incapable of doing an injustice to anybody and so he made friends, and having made them, kept them to the end. In his life there is an example for the young men of the present day. He was a good citizen, a brilliant man of his profession, and having lived the three-score and ten years, he goes to his fathers, wept over and mourned by all classes. Peace is with him.

[From *The Press*, Philadelphia, Nov. 16, 1899.]

Mr. Meginness had a notable career. He was born in Lancaster County in 1827. His earliest journalistic work was on Jersey Shore papers, and afterward in Illinois. In 1847 he enlisted from his native county of Lancaster for service in the Mexican war, and was present at the victorious entry of the American army into the City of Mexico. Subsequently he taught school in Lycoming County, and from 1869 to 1889 was editor of the *Williamsport Gazette and Bulletin*, over which journal his son, William Warren Meginness, now presides. Over the nom de plume of "John of Lancaster," Mr. Meginness wrote historical and other voluminous papers.

Death came to this conspicuous writer at a moment of complete happiness. Three weeks ago he and his good wife celebrated their golden wedding. Mr. Meginness returned home hastily late Saturday night with a memorial volume of the event that he had compiled, and opening the book he proudly remarked to his wife, "Look at the title page." As he uttered

the words he dropped dead from heart disease. The page to which he pointed contained their marriage certificate.

[From *The Philadelphia Record*, Nov. 13, 1899.]

The news of the death at Williamsport on Saturday last of John F. Meginness, one of the oldest and most widely known newspaper men of Pennsylvania, will be read with regret. The long career of this veteran editor was a useful and honorable one. He was a forceful and versatile writer and achieved prominence both as journalist and historian. His *History of the West Branch Valley* is a valuable addition to the annals of Pennsylvania, remarkably rich in details and written with marked exactness.

[From *The Reporter-Journal*, Towanda, Pa., Nov. 16, 1899.]

The news of the death at Williamsport on Saturday of John F. Meginness, one of the oldest and most widely known newspaper men of Pennsylvania, was read with regret by many people in this section of the state, particularly by those who take an interest in local history.

Mr. Meginness was a veteran of the Mexican war and held a government position during the civil war. He was connected with the *Williamsport Gazette and Bulletin* in various editorial capacities for 20 years continuously, until his retirement from active newspaper work in 1889, and contributed many articles to New York and Philadelphia papers over the nom de plume of "John of Lancaster." His "*History of the West Branch Valley of the Susquehanna*" is the only

accurate book of reference which deals with that region.

[From *The Gazette*, Athens, Pa., Nov. 16, 1899.]

He was one of the best known newspaper men in the state, a man in love with his work; and his contributions to local history will be a monument to his memory through many succeeding generations.

[From *The Morning Tribune*, Altoona, Pa., Nov. 14, 1899.]

Pennsylvania journalism has been bereft of one of its shining lights by the death of the veteran John F. Meginness, who expired suddenly at his home in Williamsport on Saturday night last. It was only a few weeks ago that he and his wife celebrated their golden wedding, and it was while in the act of exhibiting the "Golden Wedding Book," which he had just brought home from the binder, that he was stricken down. Mr. Meginness was a journalist of a high order of talent, while his contributions to the history of Pennsylvania have been interesting and important. He was born in 1827, so that he attained a good old age, carrying with him into the eternal world the love and veneration of hosts of friends.

[From *The Star-Independent*, Harrisburg, Pa., Nov. 13, 1899.]

The death of John F. Meginness, of Williamsport, historian of the West Branch Valley, and for many years connected with the newspaper press of that city, will be profoundly regretted in literary circles as well as by his host of personal friends and admirers. Mr. Meginness was well known and highly esteemed in this city.

[From *The Patriot*, Harrisburg, Pa., Nov. 14, 1899.]

The sudden death of John F. Meginness, at Williamsport Saturday night, removes one of the veteran newspaper men of the state. As the historian of the West Branch Valley, he had long enjoyed distinction. He was an editor for thirty-five years. On October 25, Mr. and Mrs. Meginness celebrated their golden wedding.

[From *The Intelligencer*, Lancaster, Pa., Nov. 13, 1899.]

For twenty years deceased was editor of the Williamsport *Gazette and Bulletin*. He has written many historical books, among which were: "The History of the West Branch Valley," "The Lost Sister of Wyoming," and the "History of Lycoming County."

[From *The Gazette*, Wellsboro, Pa.]

Mr. Meginness was one of the best known newspaper men in the state, a man in love with his work, and his contributions to local history will be a monument to his memory through many succeeding generations.

[From *The Scranton Truth*.]

John F. Meginness, the journalist and historian, who died at Williamsport last week, was a man of great industry and of most gentle nature. It was my pleasure to enjoy his acquaintance some years ago. He was greatly interested in the early life of the Wyoming and Lackawanna Valleys, and wrote a beautiful history of Frances Slocum. Mr. Meginness had a notable career. His earliest journalistic work was

on Jersey Shore papers, and afterwards in Illinois. In 1847 he enlisted from his native county of Lancaster for service in the Mexican war, and was present at the victorious entry of the American army into the City of Mexico. Subsequently he taught school in Lycoming County, and from 1869 to 1889 was editor of the *Williamsport Gazette and Bulletin*, over which journal his son, William Warren Meginness, now presides. Over the nom de plume of "John of Lancaster" Mr. Meginness wrote historical and other voluminous papers. Death came to this conspicuous writer at a moment of complete happiness. Three weeks ago he and his good wife celebrated their golden wedding. It would be well for all of us if our memory could be cherished as kindly as that of the gentle and noble-souled John F. Meginness.

[From *The Wellsboro Agitator*.]

Mr. Meginness wrote a large part of the history of this county recently published, and he was the author of numerous historical works relative to this state. He followed journalism during middle life. He was a genial, broad-minded and industrious man, and his character was so clean that he enjoyed the respect and confidence of all acquaintances.

[From *The Miltonian*, Milton, Pa.]

His devotion to the local history of the West Branch Valley in his later years has taken up all his time and he cared for nothing else, unless it was some descriptive article. He was a gentleman of the old

school, was kind, courteous and was always a favorite among all newspaper men.

[From *The Wilkes-Barre Record*, Nov. 13, 1899.]

John F. Meginness was probably the best known and surely the most able newspaper writer in Central Pennsylvania, and had acquired a wide reputation as a journalist and historian.

For a period of thirty-five years Mr. Meginness devoted his time to editorial work, and for nearly a quarter of a century was editor-in-chief of the *Williamsport Gazette and Bulletin*, being succeeded nine years ago by his son, Warren W. Meginness, the present editor.

Mr. Meginness was an indefatigable investigator of the local annals of the West Branch Valley, and through his efforts alone much valuable data which otherwise would have been lost was saved for the benefit of posterity. Over a score of historical works and pamphlets were written by Mr. Meginness, notable among them being "The Lost Sister of Wyoming" (a history of Frances Slocum); "The History of the West Branch Valley" and "The History of Lycoming County."

After Mr. Meginness had retired from active newspaper work he devoted his time entirely to his historical work, and his contributions to the press of Williamsport and the West Branch Valley under the well known nom de plume, "John of Lancaster," appeared with more or less frequency and were of permanent interest.

Mr. Meginness was held in high esteem by the newspaper men of Williamsport, many of whom had acquired their training under his watchful eye, and at his recent wedding anniversary publishers, editors, reporters and printers united in showing their appreciation.

[From *The Echo*, Montoursville, Pa.]

The sudden and unexpected death on Saturday night of John F. Meginness, the veteran journalist and historian of the West Branch Valley, was a great shock to his thousands of friends. Mr. Meginness was a man who commanded the universal respect of every man who ever had any dealings with him in any way, and was recognized as one of the most able newspaper men in the state and a historian far beyond the ordinary ability, and his work will speak volumes for him away down through the ages of years that are yet unnumbered, and the people of generations yet to come will honor and revere his name for the many good things that he has done, and the historical guides that his master mind and never-tiring hand has placed before the people, the good effect and benefit of which is destined to be as indestructible as the everlasting mountains and hills of Lycoming County, his chosen home. Truly he labored for posterity.

[From *The Muncy Luminary*, Muncy, Pa.]

It is with a feeling of deep sorrow and sincere regret that *The Luminary* chronicles the sudden death of the veteran newspaper man and local annalist,

John F. Meginness, who, under the pen name of "John of Lancaster," was for many years an interesting and voluminous writer upon local history and genealogy. The work of the local annalist is seldom fully appreciated by his contemporaries, and we venture to say that the some twenty volumes which came from the pen of Mr. Meginness will be more and more highly prized as the years go by.

In the forty or more years that have passed away since the publication of his first book, "Otzinachson; or, The History of the West Branch Valley," he has steadily worked at the collating and preserving our early annals, and it is due, in large measure, to his unremitting toil that so much of the material relating to the early history of our beautiful valley has been reclaimed before it became irretrievably lost. This work, on the part of Mr. Meginness, was largely a labor of love and brought no sufficient pecuniary return.

He was a tireless worker and a conscientious investigator, and spent days, weeks and even months in the arduous labor of searching musty official records and family papers in order to verify a tradition or establish a reputed fact. He sought to found every important assertion upon a basis of truth, and herein lies much of the value of his life-long work—its authoritative character; Mr. Meginness can always be quoted as an authority. His style was easy, his diction pure, and the future historian of Central Pennsylvania will of necessity have to rely much upon the work of "John of Lancaster."

Mr. Meginness was genial, honest and a hater of sham and hypocrisy. While he worked among the

records of the misty past, he always had an absorbing interest in the living present, and was a great newspaper reader. The collecting habit had taken full hold of him and his library contains much that is rare and unique.

[From *The Herald*, Jersey Shore, Pa., Nov. 15, 1899.]

Mr. Meginness was one of nature's noblemen, generous, kind and affable. He was one of the oldest editors of the West Branch Valley, and was known far and near as a man of remarkable literary ability and possessed of a wonderful constitution, and rarely made a failure of any undertaking. He was honest and upright in all his dealings with his fellow men, and wherever known he was held in the highest esteem. The young editor always had a warm place in his heart, and many, many encouraging words he uttered to those who were struggling to gain a place in journalism. He seemed to delight in giving encouragement where he thought it was most needed, and with his great experience and knowledge of human nature, he sought out those who were weak and inexperienced, and helped to lift them up and give confidence to push forward. Men of his forethought and magnanimity are few in these days of the busy business world. All his efforts in this line were not lost to him, nor have they fallen fruitless to the ground. Many are they to-day who will rise up and praise him for his many kind words and acts. While not possessed with much of this world's goods, yet he has gone down to his grave full of years, honored and respected, loved and eulogized as but few are, which

is far greater than riches. His death is deeply mourned because he was a useful and valued citizen, and many there are to-day who will drop a tear to his memory. John F. Meginness has gone out from among us, but we will ever remember him as a kind, good advising friend.

Mr. Meginness was the father of seven children, all of whom are respectable, well-to-do citizens. These and the estimable wife, with many friends and acquaintances, deeply mourn his sudden demise.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
And stars to set,—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death.

[From *The Muncy Democrat*, Muncy, Pa.]

To announce the death of a fellow citizen, one whose life has been an example of goodness, and whose character has been above reproach, is a sad duty to perform. Yet how much more sad it is when we are called upon to convey the announcement that one who has been a strong character, a wise adviser, a true-hearted friend to the younger element of the newspaper fraternity, has suddenly gone from among us.

John F. Meginness was a noble character, an honor to the profession, whose memory will be indelibly inscribed in the hearts of all in the fraternity who knew him. Not only was he the Nestor of newspaperdom in the West Branch Valley, but he was authority of the local history of the valley. A journalist of honest convictions, whose trenchant pen was always guided by a pure heart; an historian whose researches have

placed his works among the most accurate; a man whose acquaintance was broad and whose knowledge of men and things extended beyond the ordinary. The works of John F. Meginness will live on, an everlasting monument to his genius and the busy life that has taken its departure.

John F. Meginness will be missed; his happy greetings, his warm hand and cheering words will never more gladden the heart of those laboring in the literary and newspaper field. He has finished his course, his life's work is o'er, and his rest is one of eternal happiness.

[From *The Vidette*, Jersey Shore, Pa.]

The sudden and unexpected death of John F. Meginness, of Williamsport, on Saturday evening, Nov. 11th, 1899, removes from the ranks of journalism, and historical literature, one who had no local rival. He has, by his indefatigable labor in the gathering and collation of historical matter relating to the history of the West Branch Valley, erected a monument that will preserve his memory to future generations. As a writer, Mr. Meginness was facile and pleasing, and always interesting; as a man, genial and companionable, a loving husband, and fond parent.

[From *The Cameron County Press*.]

Thus passes away another of the old school editors; men known for their loyalty to friends and principles.

[From *The Columbian*, Bloomsburg, Pa.]

He was an editor for upwards of thirty-five years, and quite frequently during that time has written articles pertaining to the history of Columbia County, always writing over the signature of "John of Lancaster." His last narrative, in which he described a trip through this county, appeared in many of the papers hereabouts only a few months ago.

[From *The Renovo Record*.]

Mr. Meginness was one of the best known newspaper men in the state.

[From *The Ledger*, Philipsburg, Pa.]

As a local historian he was well and widely known.

[From *The Gazette*, Driftwood, Pa.]

His was a busy and useful life. He labored for posterity.

[From *The Mill Hall Times*, Mill Hall, Pa.]

John F. Meginness, the veteran editor and noted historian, died very suddenly at his home in Williamsport on Saturday evening last. He was well known throughout the West Branch Valley.

[From *The Morning Courier*, DuBois, Pa.]

Mr. Meginness was one of the oldest and most widely known journalists in the state, and was also a historian of note. He was the maker of the *Gazette and Bulletin*, and author of the History of the West

Branch Valley, both of which are well worthy to stand as monuments of a successful life.

[From *The Mirror*, Montgomery, Pa.]

The life work of John F. Meginness will live and be referred to when all now living and generations yet unborn have passed away. No marble shaft is necessary to keep green his memory. To the newspaper men of the present day his kind and fatherly aid and advice was ever ready, and, outside of his family, his cheery and ever welcome voice will be missed by none so much as these. His grand and elevating personality made him the friend of all he came in contact with, and his loss is one of the greatest this county has sustained in many years.

[From *The Hughesville Mail*.]

The death of John F. Meginness is a great loss to the field of journalism and the literary world, especially so in the West Branch Valley, where his nom de plume, "John of Lancaster," had become a household word. The young and struggling journalist will feel that he has lost a counsellor and friend, for there was none to whom the young in harness could go so freely for consolation and inspiration. His life is an example for all who labor along the same lines, one worthy of emulation.

DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

ACTION TAKEN AT A MEETING OF LYCOMING CHAPTER.

At a meeting of Lycoming Chapter, D. A. R., held on Friday, November 17, 1899, the following minute was recorded:

"Whereas, In the wisdom of an all-wise Providence, Mr. John F. Meginness has been called from his earthly historical researches to a heavenly knowledge of events;

"Resolved, That in his death Lycoming Chapter, D. A. R., has lost a valued friend, one whose interest in it was ever active, and to whom we could always refer with perfect confidence in his historical lore. Our loss is far-reaching and beyond expression.

"Resolved, That we extend the sympathy of this Chapter to the bereaved wife and family.

"Resolved, That a copy of this tribute be entered in the records of the Chapter, and that copies thereof be sent to the daily papers and to the family."

ACTION OF LANCASTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

At a meeting of the Lancaster County Historical Society, held at Lancaster, Pa., December 1, 1899, the following minute on the death of J. F. Meginness, an honorary member of the society, was offered by S. M. Sener:

"John Franklin Meginness, who was an honorary member of this society, passed into rest on November 11, 1899, at Williamsport, Pa. He was born in Colerain Township, this county, on July 16, 1827. He was an indefatigable delver in historic lore, and accomplished much in preserving for the years to come great treasures in history, biography and genealogy, particularly in the West Branch Valley. His familiar signature was 'John of Lancaster.'

"This society deeply regrets the loss of this great fellow-worker, and extends its condolence and sympathy to the family of the deceased, and directs that this fact be entered upon its minutes and sent to the family."

IN MEMORY OF "JOHN OF LANCASTER."

The shades of night have closed around—
The bells have rung their solemn sound,
The preacher and the orator, too,
Have said their last farewell adieu.

The gap is filled, the ranks full made,
And memory lingers in the shade,
With collected thoughts in faith to wait
The outcome of that eventful state.

The work is done—the pen laid down,
And he has donned the immortal crown;
No painful expectation wounds—
No disappointed hopes nor sounds.

But an eternal peace, the goal,
Fills with delight his raptured soul.
The sun that shone for seventy years,
No more his eyes will dim with tears:

With ransomed spirits, 'mid the blest,
Has entered on eternal rest.
The gage of battle he has won,
And now has laid his armor down.

The heavenly cohorts bore him way
To victory and eternal day.
Peace to his ashes, may they rest
Until the trumpets' signal blast
Proclaim to men the end of time,
The resurrection all sublime.

A. J. QUIGLEY.

Williamsport, November 16, 1899.

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